Movie Night

Unfortunately, like last year, the Harris Lass Museum’s annual ‘Movie Night’ will not be offered “live” in the Barn or in the Museum Garden. However, like last year, for those who have Internet access at home, we have selected a consolation offering. The animated cartoon movie we would have liked to have shown this year is titled: *Good Wrinkles: The Story of a Remarkable Fruit*. Here is a direct weblink to the YouTube channel of the Film Archive of the California Pioneers of Santa Clara County where it may be viewed online (running time about 21 minutes):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k1Ud0B6YeiY

or, if you prefer to access the film on Tumblr, the Pioneers offer this weblink as well:
https://pioneerfilms.tumblr.com/search/prunes+sunsweet

The Pioneers were able to download the film from the Prelinger Archive which first preserved it, see:
https://archive.org/details/GoodWrin1951

Here is some background on the movie if you choose to view it. A 1951 animated cartoon, it was commissioned by the California Prune and Apricot Growers Association using their ‘Sunsweet Growers’ trade name. The cartoon was produced by All Scope Pictures of Hollywood but direction and animation was contracted out to Harmon-Ising Cartoons. A well-known radio commentator of that era named John Nesbitt narrates the film. The cartoon opens with Sunsweet’s plump, jovial prune mascot ‘Sunny Sweet’ going to the Hollywood premier at Grauman’s Chinese Theatre of the latest film he is starring in as a swashbuckling duke of French plum royal descent. It makes it clear that he has also previously starred as a doctor who knows how to help a sick child battle irregularity and a boxer who bests a big bruiser named Fatigue with his high energy personality. From there the film segues into a cartoon history of plums and prunes, what makes California Sunsweet prunes the finest in the world, and some great USA and Scandinavian recipes for using prunes in both meat and dessert dishes. An address in San Jose is even given towards the end for requesting a free prune recipe cookbook!

The movie is suitable for the whole family and might actually make you want to eat six or seven prunes a day (like candy out of a box) to make you feel good in every way!
In Memory of Donna Jeler 1939-2021

On August 24th, Bob Byrd, a former Historic Preservation Society of Santa Clara President, notified Harris Lass Museum Board members that he had just received sad news from a member of her family that Donna Jeler had died in Provo, Utah on August 16th at the senior residence where she had been living for the past year. Longtime HPSSC members may remember that Donna was profiled in the May 1, 2019 issue of The Meteor as she had recently finished her term as Vice President and was retiring from the Board and from her 20 years of active volunteer service to the Harris Lass Museum. At that time she had recently moved to the Chateau Cupertino retirement community. However, several months later, her family helped her move to Provo, Utah as two of her daughters and a large extended family resided there.

Donna had joined HPSSC in the late 1990s first serving as a docent and helper at special events and then taking over from Betty DaVita and Anita Marencia as manager of the Harris Lass Gift Shop. A businesswoman in the interior design field, she was a whiz at finding and displaying unique, handcrafted, and vintage items in the Gift Shop and pricing merchandise to move. She kept the merchandise fresh by attending San Francisco Gift Shows and she also had a knack for selecting toys and trinkets that were fun and affordable for visiting school children to purchase. She had a beautiful smile and a charming and upbeat personality and loved singing and theatrical arts and therefore had a natural ability to serve as the ‘master of ceremonies’ at a number of Museum special events. She also had a flair for fashion, both current and vintage, and looked elegant when she dressed in period costume at the Museum’s teas and other fundraising events.

Bob Byrd in conveying the news of Donna’s death noted: “As most of you know, Donna and her late husband Frank were my neighbors for 44 years and she was the one who encouraged me to volunteer at the Harris Lass Museum after I retired in 2000.” Bob also recalled that Donna grew up and attended high school in Pittsburgh, Kansas where she loved singing in concerts and participating in theater productions. Some may remember that besides her volunteer work at the Museum, Donna was also once active in the Santa Clara Senior Center Band which performed in Olios at SHOWTIME and she sometimes sang at City or community sponsored Veteran’s Memorial events.

Donna was truly an asset to the Santa Clara community and deepest sympathy is extended to her family for their loss.

Santa Clara Historic Home Tour Committee

Although the traditional Santa Clara Historic Home Tour will be unable to resume this 2021 Holiday season, the Home Tour Committee has been meeting and plans to continue adding to the Self-Guided Walking Tours on its website at: http://sc-hometour.com/. In addition, by the first weekend in December there is a plan to post on the website a video tour of one of Santa Clara’s Old Quad historic homes, specifically, a home on the 600 block of Jackson Street known as the “Wilson House” built in 1935 in the Spanish Colonial architectural style. Make a note on your calendar to view the Home Tour website in early December 2021 to see this video.
Parade of Champions

The 52nd Santa Clara Parade of Champions will return to the streets of Downtown Santa Clara @ Franklin Square on Saturday, October 9, 2021. Mark your calendar as it will be a very special event celebrating our Community and honoring our Frontline heroes in person and will encompass pre-parade activities and festivities. This year’s parade program schedule includes: 1) 8 a.m. Farmer’s Market; 2) 9 a.m. Homestead Community Village; 3) 10:30 a.m. Opening Ceremonies and Anthem; 4) 11 a.m. Parade; 5) 1:30 to 4:30 p.m. Salsa on the Square; 6) 5 p.m. End of festivities.

The Harris Lass Museum Board/HPSSC hopes to participate in the Homestead Community Village and the Historic Home Tour Committee plans to march with a banner with participating members dressed in period costumes and accompanied by vintage vehicles.

The parade will be recorded and shown on Municipal Channel 15 and Channel 99 starting October 10th and continuing for 6 weeks.

View the Parade of Champions website at https://www.scparadeofchampions.org/ for more details related to parade entries, community tables, ways to participate and parking details if you wish to attend.

Santa Clara’s Parade of Champions evolved over time and grew from the Columbus Day parades that the YMI (Young Men’s Institute) organized after World War II. The California Pioneers of Santa Clara County have posted 12 minutes of footage from the 1948 Santa Clara Columbus Day Parade on their Film Archive YouTube website with this description: This film, donated by Larry Guerrera, shows the annual Columbus Day parade on October 17, 1948. The first part of the film was shot from the intersection of Main and Franklin Streets, on the site of the present "Park Central" apartments and the Santa Clara Courthouse. We then move to Franklin & Alviso Streets, where the "University Market" can be seen at the northeast corner of the intersection in a building that was demolished in 2013. Then off to Franklin Street & Monroe to watch the remainder of the parade. Here is a weblink to this historic film footage: Columbus Day Parade, Santa Clara, CA - 1948 - YouTube or, if you prefer to access the footage on Tumblr, the Pioneers also post to that social media site: https://pioneerfilms.tumblr.com/search/Columbus+Day+Parade.

See story of this tree on the next page!
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The Meteor newsletter is usually published in the Spring, Summer & Fall by the HPSSC.
To see the full-color edition, view on the web at www.harrislass.org or request an emailed copy.

Meteor Staff members
Mary Hanel, editor;
Sue Kozdon, layout editor.

The Harris-Lass Museum is located at 1889 Market St. (west of Winchester) in Santa Clara.

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The Tree That Disappeared
By Jeff Marinshaw

On the morning of June 25th at 9am, a Modesto Ash tree was cut down in downtown Santa Clara. More specifically, at the Harris Lass Museum, on 1889 Market St. This tree was original to the property, and it was over 100 years old. It all started when a lady by the name of Joan Cabral was very concerned about the health of the tree. She asked Chuck Quanz from the City of Santa Clara’s Public Works Department who are responsible for the museum grounds to get someone to check out the tree for them. The City’s arborist came to take a look at what was happening to their tree. The arborist, Steve Banuelos tested the health of the tree by poking a steel rod into the trunk. Sadly, the rod went all the way through with very little resistance. This confirmed the suspicion that the tree was dead inside. He determined that the tree should be cut down immediately for safety reasons. He hired the company “West Coast Arborists Inc,” a local company from Santa Clara, to do the job. The manager: Juan Ortiz, and the foreman: Gerardo Orduno led the way for the job to go smoothly. They cut the branches down in layers and the crew took the branches to the dumpster near the street. It took them a couple of days to complete but in the end they finished the job. It has given the back garden and the Japanese Maple tree more light. The Japanese Maple tree was planted in honor of Bob Tower, an artist and author who contributed a lot of his artwork to the museum.

(Editor’s note: Jeff is a sophomore at Santa Clara High School & the grandson of board member Mary Ann Marinshaw)

Membership Dues Waived for 2021

We are hoping to hold events in 2022 and return to regular docent tours. Updates will be posted on our web site www.harrislass.org and on the answering machine 408 249-7905

We are also changing our membership year to start on January 1st. (Museum membership dues were waived for 2021). More information to follow!